

April 24, 2002

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH ROCK THE VOTE  
TO PROVIDE MARKETING SERVICES  
FOR A COUNTYWIDE PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN AIMED AT YOUTH TO  
PROMOTE TOLERANCE AND PREVENT HATE VIOLENCE**

**(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS AFFECTED)  
(3 VOTES REQUIRED FOR APPROVAL)**

**CIO RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE ( ) APPROVE WITH MODIFICATION ( )  
DISAPPROVE ( )**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Approve and instruct the Chairperson of the Board to sign the attached agreement with Rock The Vote, effective upon approval by your Board, for the provision of marketing services for a countywide public education campaign to promote tolerance, mutual respect and understanding, and non-violent conflict resolution among youth, for a term of 24 months, at a cost of \$320,000, funded fully by Quality and Productivity Commission Productivity Investment Fund and Information Technology Fund grant monies, and for additional amounts that may be secured by the County for this purpose.
2. Authorize the Executive Director of the Commission on Human Relations or his designee to execute modifications and extensions that are within the conditions specified in the agreement.

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The purpose of this agreement with Rock The Vote (RTV) is to advance the strategic focus on youth of the County's Human Relations Commission

(Commission), through a comprehensive, multi-year advertising and social marketing campaign aimed at reaching teens in high schools countywide, and engaging them in projects, programs and activities that will combat hate and promote positive human relations skills and learning (hereinafter referred to as "the Campaign" or "the Youth Public Education Campaign").

During the 21 years that the Commission has been collecting and studying hate crime data, it has become increasingly apparent over time that youth have a disproportionate role in hate crime and intergroup conflict. Between 1999-2001, over 50% of all district attorney hate crime prosecutions were against juveniles. Reports of interracial and interethnic tension and conflict at L.A. County schools have been all too common, and hate-motivated crime by youth gangs continue to plague neighborhoods throughout the county. Also, hate-promoting websites, many which specifically reach out to young people, far outnumber websites that seek to promote tolerance and mutual respect among diverse groups.

This agreement will create a partnership between the County, through its Human Relations Commission, and Rock The Vote (RTV), a private, non-profit firm that specializes in providing marketing services for public interest causes targeting teens and young adults. Based on RTV's track record in partnering with youth media (MTV) and celebrities in its previous work, particularly the nationwide campaign "Fight for Your Rights: Take a Stand Against Discrimination," the agreement will give the Commission's youth public education campaign an opportunity to benefit from RTV's access to youth market research, its already established positive reputation and relationships to leverage the contract amount with additional resources, both monetary (corporate sponsorships) and in-kind (free or low-cost media space/airtime and production).

Among the products to be created by this partnership are: public service announcements for TV, radio, internet and print media with messages designed to get the attention of the targeted youth audience, placed for maximum exposure to youth (as budget allows); an interactive website (funded by a County Information Technology Fund grant) designed to actively engage youth in learning positive human relations skills and involvement in positive activities; and contests and celebrities' school visits to generate student involvement in peer mediation groups, multicultural clubs, and other proactive human relations activities, in cooperation with Commission partners doing youth human relations work.

The recommended action is necessary at this time for several reasons: to maintain the momentum of the Youth Public Education Campaign, of which phase 1 is ending

(dissemination of posters and bookmarks promoting tolerance and the toll-free hate crime information line to L.A. County schools) and phase 2 (the deliverables of this contract) needs to begin; and to respect the budgetary needs and scheduling commitments of RTV as a non-profit firm.

The contract is of critical and urgent necessity to protect public health and safety, in that the contract is to advance the progress of a campaign that addresses ongoing hate crime and campus safety issues related to interethnic tension, conflict, or harassment. If approval is delayed, it may jeopardize RTV's ability to secure services from certain companies or celebrities. Submission of this request for contract approval was delayed due to illness and unanticipated absences among staff members responsible for different aspects of this process and among key staff of the proposed contractor.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The recommended Board action promotes and furthers the Board-approved County Vision Statement (particularly with respect to diversity as a value) and Strategic Plan Goals of Service Excellence, Fiscal Integrity, and Organizational Effectiveness.

In particular, this recommended action furthers the following elements of the County Strategic plan: to provide the public with easy access to quality information and services that are both beneficial and responsive; to ensure that service delivery systems are efficient, effective and goal-oriented; to manage more effectively the resources we have; to increase public-private partnerships; and to improve the well-being of children and families as measured by the achievements in five outcomes adopted by the Board: good health, economic well-being, safety and survival, emotional and social well-being, and educational and workforce readiness.

It also furthers the Commission's strategic goal of building human relations infrastructure for youth and in the schools.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

The contract amount of \$320,000 is fully covered by a Productivity Investment Fund grant of \$370,000, and an Information Technology Fund grant of \$36,400 with a \$13,600 contingency (for development and maintenance of an interactive youth-oriented website), and thus does not draw any funds from this department's general fund. The department will continue to raise additional funds for the youth public education campaign through a variety of strategies. However, the department will incur only those expenditures for which revenue has been obtained from outside the

department's general fund monies. No increase in net County cost is required or anticipated as a result of the recommended action.

Included in the contract is the contractor's commitment to work jointly with the department to raise an additional \$500,000 to augment marketing campaign efforts. (Contract, exhibit A, Scope of Work objective 4.1) Contractor Rock the Vote has extensive relationships with firms and individuals that have resulted in no or low-cost assistance with marketing research, ad production, website development, free media, celebrity involvement, and other assets that will result in significant leveraging of the contract amount. If this contract was not approved to be entered into, the potential for raising additional revenues through our agreement with this contractor would be lost.

The department has already raised additional, revenue from non-County sources for this youth public education campaign. We secured a grant award of \$180,000 by The California Endowment, to promote tolerance in the aftermath of the wave of hate and discrimination following the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks. (In a separate motion, this department is requesting Board approval to accept that grant award.) A portion of the grant award would help finance the same youth public education campaign that is the purpose of this recommended action.

For the fiscal year 2001-02, the department has requested and received CAO approval for a budget adjustment in the amount of \$132,702, to be received from the Productivity Investment Fund and to be spent for this contract, encumbered under "Youth Public Education Campaign." The remainder of the contract amount will be paid over the next 24 months and during the next two fiscal years, as set forth in the contract terms.

#### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

This contract is authorized under California Government Code Section 26227. It contains all Board-required provisions, and was reviewed and approved by County Counsel and the Chief Administrative Officer. The contract is with a private, non-profit organization named "Rock The Vote" (RTV). RTV specializes in providing social marketing services targeted at teens and young adults.

The term of the contract is for 24 months commencing on the day of execution by your Board. The County has the option to extend the contract term for up to four additional twelve-month periods, for a maximum total contract term of six years.

Any extension may be exercised by the Commission Executive Director, upon approval by County Counsel.

The maximum contract sum of \$320,000 for the 24 month period may be increased in the event that additional funds for this service are secured by the County.

The scope of work for the contracted services includes the development and placement of creative ads countywide with positive human relations themes reaching 150,000 teens of high school age. The ads will take various forms, appearing on billboards, bus benches, movie theaters, as public service announcements on major youth radio stations, television and magazines. Collateral will be produced, including stickers, posters, t-shirts, video game cards, CD-rom disks as part of a 'viral' marketing strategy.

The scope of work includes the design, building and maintenance of an interactive website that will actively reach 25,000 county youth, to engage them with quizzes, tests, dialogues and other information and various links to positive human relations activities, peacebuilding and social interaction skills and other socially transformative information.

The contract's terms require the creation of internet and non-internet avenues for reaching 50,000 county teens, such as competitions among schools for the most creative and effective anti-discrimination action plan, with the prize being a visit or concert by youth music, sports or movie celebrities.

The contract's terms provide for the contractor to identify and enroll a minimum of five major corporate, business, foundation co-sponsors to obtain additional funds for the Campaign, and during the term of the contract, raise \$500,000 in additional funds for the Campaign.

The contractor is required to measure the Campaign's success through project evaluation, which may take the form of longitudinal tests, surveys, polls, or focus groups. The contract's scope of work contains measurable objectives, implementation activities, a corresponding timeline, and methods for evaluating objectives and documentation.

The contractor is in compliance with all Board, Chief Administrative Officer, and County Counsel requirements.

In January 2001, the department first presented a proposal for the Youth Public Education Campaign to Commissioners and Board deputies. In February 2001, Phase 1 of the Campaign was begun with Transformative Youth Workshops in each of the five Supervisorial districts, funded with \$15,000 taken from donations to the Commission. The workshops produced some of the artwork for anti-hate youth posters and bookmarks subsequently created and disseminated widely since October 2001.

In May 2001, the County's Quality and Productivity Commission voted \$370,000 from its Productivity Investment Fund for the Commission's Youth Public Education Campaign. In July 2001, the County's Information Technology Fund grants \$50,000 for an interactive youth-oriented website, which is to be a critical element in the Campaign's strategy to engage and involve youth in positive human relations learnings and activities.

### **CONTRACTING PROCESS**

In August 2001, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was released to the Department of Health Services' database of marketing firms. The RFP was also posted on the County's Small Business Procurement Web Site, as is required by Board order 59 of July 18, 2000. Three (3) proposals were received by the September 12<sup>th</sup> deadline, and were reviewed for compliance with the RFP criteria by an Evaluation Panel of four: the two Assistant Executive Directors of the Commission, one which has a substantial public relations and marketing background, and two outside experts: one from the USC Annenberg School for Communication, and the other from a private communications firm. All were checked and cleared of any relationships that might create a conflict of interest. Also, the three proposers were informed of delays in the process due to post-September 11<sup>th</sup> urgencies experienced by the Commission.

In October 2001, the two top proposers, as determined by the ratings of the individuals on the evaluation panel, were invited to interviews seeking specific additional information related to the RFP criteria. Those two interviews occurred in November 2001. In December 2001, additional evaluation and analysis of the two proposers took place.

The RFP criteria used to evaluate the winning proposal included: 1) experience in developing a theme and concept for an overall initial campaign of this type; 2) ability to provide research, focus groups and other studies to demonstrate how to most

effectively reach the target audience, youth of approximately 14-18 years of age; 3) ability to devise a comprehensive multi-year advertising and marketing campaign, including demonstrating: i.) how the existing budget could be used for greatest impact; ii) how funds could be enhanced by cooperative advertising strategies and linkages to potential funders so that the budget might be augmented; iii.) how the initial campaign could be expanded in future years should additional funds be obtained; 4) ability to produce and coordinate placement of all advertising using both traditional media outlets (e.g., print) and non-traditional media (e.g., the internet); and 5) ability to produce all collateral pieces, with special weight given to proposers who have effectively used new technology for marketing. The proposal included the ability to design and maintain a youth website and develop other avenues for youth who do not depend on internet access.

Rock the Vote scored consistently higher on the criteria than the other proposers. For example, Rock the Vote has access to market research on youth done by MTV and planned specific focus groups as part of its proposal; had done youth-oriented marketing campaigns with a social message component as part of its mission statement (e.g., "Fight for your Rights: Take A Stand Against Discrimination" campaign in several major cities in US); has demonstrated the ability to leverage funds by using donated space by major media outlets and billboard firm or, by attracting corporate sponsors to help fund its campaigns; demonstrated thorough knowledge of both traditional media outlets and new technologies, such as CD-Roms and video games; demonstrated the ability to produce creative, catchy collateral pieces from brochures to T-shirts to special events that drew youth by the thousands and had the expertise in designing youth-oriented websites.

In January 2002, discussions began with Rock the Vote to determine potential scope of work and timeline. In February 2002, Rock the Vote made an initial presentation to the Commission. In March 2002, upon recommendation by the Commission's Executive Director and staff, the Commission voted to recommend contracting with Rock the Vote to your Board.

The department has evaluated and determined that the contractor fully complies with the requirements of the Living Wage Program (County Code Chapter 2.201) and agrees to pay a living wage to its full-time employees who are providing County services.

#### **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

Currently, the Commission's staff of less than 20 face a daunting challenge in trying to reach youth of high school ages countywide on issues of prejudice, bigotry and

intergroup relations. There are approximately 82 school districts of the county, along with a myriad of other public and private schools and institutions, that are not able to create an effective learning environment in a context of intergroup tensions and conflict, harassment and violence due to prejudice and hate. Commission past and ongoing efforts to assist school policymakers and administrators in the development of policies, programs and practices that address human relations issues affecting their students, the Commission's School Intergroup Conflict Initiative's educational and training conferences, as well as lending technical assistance on-site can only have limited impact.

Approval of this agreement would enable the Commission to utilize the power of the media to set a new tone, and to connect with teens countywide on issues that they grapple with each day. More importantly, this campaign would not rely solely upon an image or brief message in a public service announcement to make change in youth attitudes or behavior. Rather, it would give them the chance to spend more time and energy on the issues, via an interactive website and activities organized by school and community organizations. The campaign would allow them to gain knowledge and skills about successfully navigating in a complex, multicultural society. It could change attitudes and behavior for better human relations in a way that government-private partnerships have already done successfully for better public health (anti-tobacco and drug campaigns).

### **CONCLUSION**

The Executive Officer is requested to return one stamped copy of the approved Board letter and its attachments, and two signed copies of the Contract to the Commission on Human Relations.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by:

**Robin S. Toma**  
Executive Director  
Commission on Human Relations

**Jon W. Fullinwider**  
Chief Information Officer

Attachments (1)  
Contract, with attachments



The Honorable Board of Supervisors

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c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Jon W. Fullinwider, Chief Information Officer  
Lloyd W. Pellman, County Counsel  
Susanne L. Cumming, Commission President